

## **Organisational Structure and Employee Commitment of Academic Staff in a Private University in Uganda**

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**Abstract:** This study analysed the relationship between organisational structure (OS) and employee commitment (EC) of academic staff. The aspects of OS that were related to EC were formalisation, centralisation and complexity. This correlational and cross-sectional study was carried out on 145 academic staff of a branch of a private university in Uganda using a self-administered questionnaire. Descriptive analysis, Factor Analysis, Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) tests and correlation analysis were carried out. Descriptive analysis revealed that affective commitment of academic staff was high while continuance and normative commitment were moderate. However, the EC index of academic staff indicated that it was moderate. The study also revealed that while implementation of organisational formalisation (OF) and centralisation (OC) was high, for organisational complexity (OX) it was moderate. Factor analysis and Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) tests revealed that the items measuring both EC and OS subscales were valid and reliable measures. Correlation analysis revealed a weak positive but significant relationship between OF and OC with EC but for OX it was insignificant. It was concluded that EC of academic staff in private universities in Uganda was a challenge, organisational formalisation was pertinent to promotion of EC but centralisation and complexity were not. It was thus recommended that there should be effective implementation of formalisation in the universities. However, organisational centralisation and complexity may not be over emphasised.

**Key Words:** Centralisation. Complexity. Employee Commitment. Formalisation. Organisational Structure. Organisational Commitment.

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Date of Submission: 15-04-2019

Date of acceptance: 01-05-2019

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Universities influence development of countries through their contribution to improved technology, knowledge transfer, promoting national unity, and democracy, supporting innovation and increasing productivity (Mugizi, 2018). This is achieved through the roles academic staff play including teaching, supervision, research and publication and community service. The teaching, research and innovations of academic staff are potentially beneficial when they interact with the enterprise sector (Abba & Mugizi, 2018). Still, graduates from the universities have the ability to generate new ideas and through community service promote social service, financial literacy, health and reduce crime in communities (Preece 2011). However, for academic staff to fulfil these roles, they need to be committed to their jobs. Nonetheless, the commitment of academic staff in universities in Uganda is low (Mugizi & Nuwatuhaire, 2019). The low commitment of academic staff can be seen in frequent strikes they engage in, threats of strikes, delay to mark examinations and absenteeism from work. Also, a number of academic staff exhibit declining motivation and commitment to excellence by not marking examinations but instead fake marks for students. Others fail to prepare notes but plagiarise on online notes for their students (Asiimwe & Steyn, 2013; Mugizi, Bakkabulindi & Bisaso, 2015).

Nonetheless, universities in Uganda do not only face the challenge of low commitment of academic staff, their organisational structures are also problematic. The management of universities in Uganda is at a crossroad because of inappropriate organisational structures. The nature of existing structures threatens the survival of universities making them increasingly unstable which deterred their success. Most stakeholders more especially the employees such as academic staff were dissatisfied with the organisational structural models which prevented them from exhibiting their innovativeness, creativity, academic freedom and autonomy (Zziwa, 2014). Therefore, with the low commitment of academic staff in universities in Uganda, the unanswered empirical that emerged which attracted the attention of this study was, is there a relationship between organisational structure and employee commitment of academic staff in universities in Uganda. Therefore, this study analysed the relationship between organisational structure in terms of formalisation, centralisation and complexity and employee commitment of academic staff in a private university in Uganda.

### **Organisational Structure and Employee Commitment**

**Employee Commitment.** Commitment is defined generally as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation (Wang, Indridason & Saunders, 2010). Employee commitment (EC) may emerge in different ways that are the desire to remain in the organisation (affective commitment), the need to remain in the organisation (continuance commitment) or the mind-set of an obligation to remain in the organisation (normative commitment) (Mercurio, 2015). Affective commitment describes an individual's desire to stay with the organisation given her/ his emotional attachment to, and identification with the organisation (Stinglhamber et al., 2015). Continuance commitment describes an individual's need to remain with the organisation resulting from her /his recognition of the costs (tenure, pay, benefits, vesting of pensions and family commitment among others) associated with leaving the organisation (Wang et al., 2010).

In contrast, normative commitment reflects an individual's feeling of obligation to maintain organisational membership because he/ she believes it is morally right to be loyal to, and stay in, the organisation (Jaros, 2007). EC is an important factor for organisational outcomes and performance. Employees with high organisational commitment feelings affect organisational performance in positive ways because they lessen the frequency of performing negative behaviour and improve the quality of service (Yilmaz & Çokluk-Bökeoğlu, 2008). Employee commitment encourages the individual to exhibit organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) that is to do many voluntary actions necessary for the organisation. Other authors propose that employee commitment reduces employee turnover (Lambert & Hogan, 2009). Employee commitment leads to acceptance of organisational change, because when an organisation engages in change initiatives, committed employees provide many benefits such as putting in extra effort to ensure that the change succeeds (Visagie & Steyn, 2011). Organisational commitment enhances knowledge sharing between employees, expounding that with knowledge sharing, information, skill or expertise are reciprocally exchanged among members off the organisation (Demirel & Goc, 2013). Knowledge sharing leads to the creation of new ideas among the employees and presenting new business ideas fundamental to a living organisation.

**Organisational Structure.** Organisational structure refers to both the communication lines and the reporting responsibilities in an institution (Holtzhausen & Fourie, 2011). Organisational structure covers the formal configuration between individuals and groups regarding the allocation of tasks, responsibilities and authority within the organisation (Lunenburg, 2012). Organisational structure is one of the organisation components that include formalisation, complexity, and centralisation (Shafaei, Rahnama, Alaei & Jasour, 2012). Formalisation refers to the amount of written documentation in the organisation. It indicates the extent to which job tasks are defined by formal regulations and procedures. These rules and procedures are written to standardize operations in organisations. Standardisation is the extent to which employees work according to standard procedures and rules in an organisation. It ensures employees complete their duties and tasks in the required manner, and therefore, ensures that an employee's actions and behaviours are routine and predictable, and that similar work activities are performed in a uniform manner at all locations (Al-Qatawneh, 2014). Centralisation or hierarchy of authority refers to the number of role incumbents who participate in decision making and the number of areas in which they participate. The lower the proportion of role incumbents who participate and the fewer the decision areas in which they participate, the more centralised the organisation (Lunenburg, 2012). With centralisation, there is organisational control that is a cycle that includes the three stages of target setting, measuring or monitoring and feedback. Control in the bureaucracy consists of rules, standards, and internal procedures. Developing and enforcing performance control and behavioural prescriptions improve decisions and increases predictability of performance (Tran & Tian, 2013).

Centralisation leads to an increase of decision making at the higher hierarchical levels within an organisation and a decrease of participation of employees in the decision making process. Organisation structure displays the system of task and authority relationship that control how employees use resources to achieve the organisational goals (Kalyani, 2006). Complexity refers to the inter-organisational separation which involves specialisation, division of labour and the number of levels in the organisational hierarchy (Kermani, 2013). Complexity or specialisation is the number of occupational specialties included in an organisation and the length of training required of each. Person specialisation and task specialisation distinguish the degree of specialisation. The greater the number of person specialists and the longer the period of training required achieving person specialisation (or degree held), the more complex the organisation is (Lunenburg, 2012). Complex or specialised structures have departments with employees that are functionally specialised or integrated. Low levels of horizontal integration reflect an organisation in which the departments and employees are functionally specialised, whereas high levels of horizontal integration reflect an organisation in which departments and employees are integrated in their work, skills, and training (Teixeira, Koufteros & Peng, 2013). Suman and Srivastava (2012) contend that a decision-making organisational structure that encourages member participation or a communication process which keeps the individual informed with respect to valued aspects of the organisation may affect felt responsibility and role involvement and therefore, commitment.

## **II. THEORETICAL REVIEW**

Contingency theory provided the framework for this study. The contingency theory posits that organisational effectiveness results from matching organisational characteristics to contingencies (Volberda, der Weerdt, Verwaal, Stienstra & Verdu, 2012). Contingency refers to any variable that moderates the effect of an organisational characteristic on organisational performance (Pugh & Hickson, 2016). The structural contingency theory of organisations argues that the performance of an organisation is dependent upon the fit between organisational structure and contingencies (Volberda et al., 2012). Three main elements form the core paradigm of structural contingency theory, namely; there is an association between contingency and the organisational structure; contingency impacts the organisational structure; and there is a fit of some level of the structural variable to each level of the contingency, where high fit leads to effectiveness and low fit leads to ineffectiveness (Morton & Hu, 2008). A number of potential contingencies include organisational characteristics such as size, work rules and policy (formalisation), roles, number of levels in the organisational hierarchy (centralisation). Suman and Srivastava (2012) and inter-organisational separation that is specialisation, division of labour and the amount of levels in the organisational hierarchy (complexity) (Kermani, 2013). This theory proposes that organisational structure leads to employee commitment. This theory, therefore, was the basis for relating organisational structure and employee commitment of academic staff in a university.

## **III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Several studies (e.g. Al-Qatawneh, 2014; Ansari & Valiyan, 2015; Harney & Jordan, 2008; Holagh, Noubar & Bahador, 2014; Lambert, Paoline & Hogan, 2006; Lambert, Qureshi, Klahm, Smith & Frank, 2018; Sahoo, Behera & Tripathy, 2010; Shafaei, Rahnama, Alaei & Jasour, 2012; Suman & Srivastava, 2012) relate organisational structure to employee commitment (EC). Al-Qatawneh (2014) examined the impact of organisational structure on organisational commitment of employees in public and private firms in Amman in Jordan. Regression results revealed that organisational structure dimensions, namely formalisation and standardisation had a significant positive effect on organisational commitment in both sectors except centralisation. Ansari and Valiyan (2015) studied the relationship between organisational structure and organizational commitment using employees of a water and wastewater company in Golestan Province in Iran as the sample. Their regression results indicated a significant positive relationship between formalisation and complexity with organisational commitment, but not centralisation.

Harney and Jordan (2008) sought to find out whether line managers could stimulate improvements in firm performance by eliciting appropriate employee outcomes. Interview responses from staff of a call centre in the UK disclosed that flat structures did not motivate employee commitment because a company with flat structures (complexity) provided no clear routes in terms of career progression. Holagh et al. (2014) analysed the effect of organisational structure on organisational creativity and commitment using staff of Tabriz municipality in Iran as units of analysis. Their regression results showed a significant positive relationship between organisational structure and commitment. Lambert et al. (2006) examined the various forms of centralisation and formalisation in to understand their impact on organisational commitment of staff at a Midwestern high security state prison in the USA. Regression analysis established that centralisation had significant negative effects on organisational commitment but formalisation had a significant positive impact on organisational commitment. Lambert et al. (2018) explored the effects of perceptions of organizational structure on organisational commitment among Indian police officers. Regression results indicated that formalisation and complexity significantly influenced organisational commitment. Sahoo et al. (2010) in systematic review of the previous research works on employee empowerment and workplace commitment established that a sense of commitment can be developed in employees through the process of de-layering (organisational flattening).

Shafaei et al. (2012) evaluated the impact of organisational structure and organisational commitment of employees of the statistical society of Parsabad Islamic Azad University. Their structural equation model analysis revealed that organisational structure in terms of formalisation and centralisation had a positive and significant effect on organisational commitment. Suman and Srivastava (2012) studying antecedents of organisational commitment across different hierarchical levels of the public sector in India used staff of a steel plant as the study sample. Their regression results showed that organisational structure had significant positive relationship on organisational commitment. However, from the above studies some gaps emerge. For example, whereas Al-Qatawneh (2014), Ansari and Valiyan (2015) and Lambert et al. (2018) established that a positive relationship existed only between formalisation and complexity (standardisation) with EC, Holagh et al. (2014), Sahoo et al. (2010), Shafaei et al. (2012) and Suman and Srivastava (2012) established a relationship between all the dimensions of organisational structure and EC and Lambert et al. (2006) established that centralisation had significant negative effects on EC. On the other hand, none of the studies carried out in the African context. These gaps thus made it necessary for this study to evaluate whether in the context of a university in Uganda, the following hypotheses organisational structure relate to employee commitment.

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is a relationship between formalisation and employee commitment.  
H<sub>2</sub>: There is a relationship between centralisation and employee commitment.  
H<sub>3</sub>: There is a relationship between complexity and employee commitment.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

**Research Design and Sample.** The study being a survey adopted correlational and cross-sectional designs. The correlational design was used because the study involved relating two variables namely organisational structure and employee commitment. The cross-sectional design allowed the obtaining of useful data in a relatively short period of time. The sample comprised 145 academic staff of a branch of a private university in Western Uganda. The study employed simple random sampling a technique by which the respondents were selected at random and entirely by chance. The sampling method gave every member of the academic staff an equal chance of being included in the sample enabling collection of data that produced findings that can be generalised. The researchers personally collected data and ensured that the study was carried out in an ethical manner. Ethical issues given utmost importance by the researchers were obtaining informed consent from the respondents, guaranteeing anonymity, confidentiality, respect for privacy and ensuring honesty in the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the results by strictly basing them on the data collected.

**Instrument.** Using the quantitative approach, particularly the survey design, data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) - appended. The SAQ comprised three sections, namely A through C. Section A was on the background characteristics of the respondents with nominal questions on the respondent's age group, sex, highest level of education, tenure of service, and position in the hierarchy of the university. Sections B and C were on the dependent and independent variables (DV and IVs) respectively and were developed based on instruments already used by other scholars basing on the premise that their validities and reliabilities could be taken for granted initially. The questions were based on the five-point Likert scale from a minimum of 1 for the worst case scenario (strongly disagree) to a maximum of 5, which is the best case scenario (Strongly agree). The question items in section B on the DV (employee commitment) covering three aspects namely affective, continuance and normative commitment adopted question items from Mugizi, Bakkabulindi and Ssempebwa (2016). Section C was on the IVs (organisational structure) and covered three variables namely formalisation, centralisation and complexity. The question items on formalisation were adopted from Oldham and Hackman (1981) and Lambert et al. (2006), question items on centralisation were adopted from Caruana, Morris and Vella (1998) and Oldham and Hackman (1981) and question items on complexity were adopted from Deewar, Whetten and Boje (1980) because their reliabilities were already confirmed. The validities of the question items were also guaranteed based on the ground that an instrument cannot be valid unless it is reliable (Hee, 2014). However, after data collection, the respective items were subjected to factors analysis and reliability test to reconfirm validity and reliability and the results are presented in appropriate sections in section four (findings).

**Data Management.** Since the study relied on tools developed by other scholars whose validities and reliabilities had already been verified, there was computation of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), particularly Direct Oblimin Oblique method to establish correlation among factors (Rossoni, Engelbert & Bellegard, 2016). The reliabilities of the constructs were established using Cronbach Alpha method provided by SPSS. The data collected were processed by coding all data questionnaires, entering them into the computer using SPSS, summarising them using frequency tables and editing them to remove errors. The data analysis was done at univariate and bivariate analyses. The data analysis at univariate level involved calculating frequencies, percentages and means. At bivariate level, the dependent variable (DV), employee commitment (EC) was correlated on each of the three organisational structure variables namely, formalisation, centralisation and complexity.

#### V. RESULTS

**Background Characteristics.** The data on background characteristics of the respondents in the study in Table 1 indicate that the modal percentage (37.9%) of the academic staff was 40 years and above, male (58.6%), had master's degree (65.5%), working experience of 1 but less than five years (51.7%) and were strictly academic only (58.6%). The results on demographic characteristics of the teachers are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Background Characteristics

Item	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Age	Up to 30 years	40	27.6
	30 but 40 years	50	34.5
	40 years and years	55	37.9
	Total	145	100.0

Gender	Male	85	58.6
	Female	60	41.4
	Total	145	100.0
Education level	Bachelor's degree	20	13.8
	Postgraduate diploma	5	3.4
	Master's degree	95	65.5
	PhD degree	25	17.2
	Total	145	100.0
Working experience	Less than 1 year	20	13.8
	1 but less than 5 years	75	51.7
	5 but less than 10 years	30	20.7
	More than 10 years	20	13.8
	Total	145	100.0
Position in hierarchy	Administrative position	15	10.3
	Strictly academic staff only	130	89.7
	Total	145	100.0

**Employee Commitment.** Employee commitment (EC) was studied as a multi-dimensional concept covering affective (AC), continuance (CC) and normative commitment (NC). The results on the EC concepts include frequencies, percentages and means. Factor loadings and Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) results are also presented showing the validity and reliability of the results. The results are as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Means, Factors Loadings and Cronbach Alphas on Components of EC

AC	Item Means	Overall Means	Factors Loadings		Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
			1	2	
AC1	4.34	3.87	0.747		0.845
AC2	4.28		0.886		
AC3	3.52		0.649		
AC4	3.83			0.855	
AC5	3.62		0.871		
AC6	3.83		0.712		
AC7	3.66			0.982	
Eigenvalue			3.550	2.499	
% variance			55.221	16.733	
CC	Item Means	3.26	Factors Loadings		Alpha( $\alpha$ )
CC1	3.21		0.886		
CC2	3.28		0.858		
CC3	3.17		0.826		
CC4	3.28		0.776		
CC5	3.34		0.775		
Eigenvalue			3.406		
% variance			68.121		
NC	Item Means	3.47	Factors Loadings		Alpha( $\alpha$ )
NC1	3.38		0.633		
NC2	3.72		0.712		
NC3	3.45		0.785		
NC4	3.17		0.836		
NC5	2.72		0.794		
NC6	3.28		0.565		
Eigenvalue			3.173		
% variance			52.891		

The results in Table 2 show that the academic staff rated their AC to be high (overall mean = 3.87 corresponding to agree) but their CC and NC were moderate (overall mean = 3.26; mean = 3.47 corresponding to undecided) respectively. While the academic staff were committal about their AC levels, they were non-committal about their CC and NC levels of OC. Factor Analysis indicated that the items on AC could be reduced to two factors but those of CC and NC could be reduced to only one factor. The eigenvalues for AC were 3.550 and 2.499 while those of CC and NC were 3.406 and 3.173 respectively. CC explained over 55% and

16% while CC and NC explained over 68% and 52% of the joint variation in the respective items constituting a factor respectively. With factor loadings that were at least 0.5 strong considered (Coetzee, Marx & Potgieter, 2017), the results in Table 2 implied that each item loaded highly on the corresponding factor. Therefore, all the items were valid measures of the constructs (AC, CC & NC) they measured. The Cronbach alphas = 0.845, 0.881 and 0.808 for the respective components of OC were above the benchmark = 0.70 (Taber, 2017). This indicates that the items for the three dimensions of OC that were used to collect data were reliable measures.

**Employee Commitment Index.** In Table 3, the results were presented as per each of the aspects of employee commitment, namely; affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC) and normative commitment (NC). For purposes of subsequent analysis, an average measure EC was derived from the three components (AC, CC & NC). To indicate an overall picture of how the respondents rated EC levels, an average index of EC was computed for the 18 items that were 7 items for AC, 5 items for CC and 6 items for NC. The summary of the statistics on the same were a mean = 3.47 and standard deviation = 0.715. The results showed that the mean average suggesting the EC of academic staff was moderate. The low standard deviation suggested low dispersion hence normal distribution of the responses. Therefore, the results could be subjected to correlation analysis and appropriate results obtained.

**Organisational Structure.** Organisational Structure (OC) was also studied as a multi-dimensional construct covering organisational formalisation (OF), centralisation (OC) and complexity (OX). OC results also included frequencies, percentages and means. Also for each aspect of OC, factor loadings and Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) results are presented indicating the validity and reliability of the results. The results are as presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Means, Factors Loadings and Cronbach Alphas on Components of OS**

OF	Item Means	Overall Means	Factors Loadings		Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
			1	2	
OF1	3.86	3.65	0.694		0.765
OF2	3.90		0.863		
OF3	3.84		0.811		
OF4	3.34		0.672		
OF5	3.31			0.865	
OF6	3.56			0.804	
OF7	3.72			0.800	
Eigenvalue			2.611	2.260	
% variance			42.795	22.150	
OC	Item Means	Overall Means	Factors Loadings		Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
			1	2	
OC1	3.84	3.86	0.670		0.844
OC2	3.45		0.677		
OC3	3.95		0.742		
OC4	4.09		0.683		
OC5	3.81		0.719		
OC6	3.99		0.773		
OC7	4.06		0.779		
Eigenvalue			3.646	1.32	
% variance			52.086	16.167	
OX	Item Means	Overall Means	Factors Loadings		Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
			1	2	
OX1	2.74	3.89		0.903	0.783*
OX2	3.12		0.820		0.727**
OX3	3.56		0.867		
OX4	3.22		0.694		
OX5	3.94		0.843		
OX6	3.33		<u>0.536</u>	<u>0.566</u>	
OX7	3.40		<u>0.676</u>	<u>0.693</u>	
OX8	2.79			0.917	
Eigenvalue			3.710	2.541	
% variance			64.954	13.169	

\*Initial alpha, \*\* subsequent alpha

The results in Table 3 show that academic staff rated OF and OC as high (overall mean = 3.65; mean = 3.89 corresponding to agreed) respectively. Nevertheless, operation of OX was rated as moderate (mean = 3.26). The results suggested that academic staff were committal on operation of OF and OC in the university but were non-committal on OX. Factor Analysis showed that the items on each of the three aspects of OS could be reduced to only two factors with the eigenvalues as follows: OF = 2.611 and 2.260, OC = 3.291 and 1.533, and OX = 3.710 and 2.541 3.011 respectively. OF factors explained over 42% and 22%, OC explained over 52% and 16% and OX explained over 67% and 13% of the joint variation in the respective items constituting a factor. With factor loadings that were at least 0.5 strong considered, the results in Table 2 indicate that each item loaded highly on the corresponding factor except for items 6 and 7 of OX which load highly on both factors. These items were considered complex and thus dropped from subsequent analysis as the respondents seemed not to have had a clear picture of them (Lance, Butts & Michels, 2006). The Cronbach alphas for OF and OC that were 0.765 and 0.807 were above the benchmark = 0.70 indicating that the results of the two constructs were reliable. For OX, the final Cronbach alpha was 0.727 initially 0.783 indicating that dropping the six and seventh items made the items more valid but less reliable because of the reduction of the alpha. With the items for all the constructs of OS valid and reliable, the items used to collect data were thus reliable measures.

### Correlation Results

To establish whether the existing organisational structure (OS) in terms of organisational formalisation (OF), centralisation (OC) and complexity (OX) related to employee commitment, the researcher carried out correlation analysis. The results were as given in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Correlation Results for Organisational Structure and Employee Commitment

	Employee Commitment	Organisational Formalisation	Organisational Centralisation	Organisational Complexity
Employee Commitment	1	0.189*	-0.099	0.069
Organisational Formalisation		1	0.239	0.408
Organisational Centralisation			1	0.229**
Organisational Complexity				1

The results in Table 4 suggest that only aspects of organisational structure namely; organisational formalisation ( $r = 0.189$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) had a weak but positive and significant relationship with employee commitment but organisational centralisation ( $r = -0.099$ ,  $p = 0.239 > 0.05$ ) had a negative and insignificant relationship while and organisational complexity ( $r = 0.069$ ,  $p = 0.408 > 0.05$ ) had a positive but insignificant relationship. This means that the first ( $H_1$ ) was supported while the second and third hypothesis ( $H_2$  &  $H_3$ ) were rejected.

## VI. DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicated that employee commitment (EC) of academic staff was moderate. This finding is consistent with the premise on which this study was based that commitment of teachers was low (Mugizi & Nuwatuhaire, 2019) with a number of academic staff exhibiting declining commitment to excellence (Asimwe & Steyn, 2013; Mugizi et al. 2015). The results on the first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) to the effect that there is a relationship between organisational formalisation and EC showed that the hypothesis was supported. This finding concurs with the findings of previous scholars. For instance, Al-Qatawneh (2014) organisational formalisation had a significant positive effect on organisational commitment. Similarly, Ansari and Valiyan (2015) indicated a significant positive relationship between formalisation and organisational commitment. Also, Lambert et al. (2006) formalisation had a significant positive impact on organisational commitment. Further still, Lambert et al. (2018) reported that formalisation significantly influenced organisational commitment. Last but not least, Shafae et al. (2012) also revealed that organisational formalisation had a positive and significant effect on organisational commitment.

The results for the second hypothesis ( $H_2$ ) to the effect that there is there is a relationship between organisational centralisation and EC showed that the hypothesis was rejected. This finding is consistent with the findings of previous scholars. Al-Qatawneh (2014) found out that centralisation had not positive and significant effect on organisational commitment. Similarly, Ansari and Valiyan (2015) did not find appositve and significant effect between centralisation and organisational commitment. On their part, Lambert et al. (2006)

established that centralisation had significant negative effects on organisational commitment. However, the finding was inconsistent with Shafae et al. (2012) who reported that centralisation had a positive and significant effect on organisational commitment. Nevertheless, with the findings of the study consistent with those of previous scholars, this means that OC had no positive relationship with EC. Lastly, the results for the third hypothesis (H<sub>3</sub>) to the effect that there is a relationship between organisational complexity and EC showed that the hypothesis was rejected. This finding was agreed with the study by Harney and Jordan (2008) which reported flat structures (complexity) did not motivate employee commitment because a company with flat structures provided no clear routes in terms of career progression. However, the finding was inconsistent with the findings of most other scholars. For example, Ansari and Valiyan (2015) reported that there was a significant positive relationship between complexity and organisational commitment. Similarly, Lambert et al. (2018) indicated that complexity significantly influenced organisational commitment. Also, Sahoo et al. (2010) established that a sense of commitment can be developed in employees through the process of de-layering (organisational flattening).

## VII. CONCLUSION

Basing from the discussion above, it can be concluded that employee commitment (EC) of academic staff in private universities in Uganda was also challenge. With respect to the level of organisational formalisation it is pertinent to promotion of EC in private universities although centralisation and complexity are not. Therefore, it is recommended that there should effective implementation of formalisation. However, organisational centralisation and complexity may not be overemphasised. However, the findings of this study especially on organisational complexity were controversial as they were inconsistent with the findings of most the previous studies. This is because while most previous studies revealed that organisational complexity had a relationship with EC, this study did not find a relationship. Therefore, future research should further be carried out on the relationship between organisational complexity in private universities in Uganda with studies involving several private universities in Uganda.

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Appendix: Study Instrument

Construct	Item	Measure
<b>Section A Background Characteristics</b>		
Background	BV1	Age group of the respondent in years (Up to 30, 30 but below 40, 40 and above)
	BV2	Sex of the respondent (Male, Female)
	BV3	Highest level of education attained by the respondent (Bachelor's degree, Postgraduate diploma, Master's degree, PhD degree)
	BV4	Marital status of the respondent (Single never married, Married, Widowed, Divorced)
	BV5	Tenure in years of employment attained by the respondent in the current University (Less than one, One but less than five, Five but less than 10, 10 and more)
	BV6	Position of the respondent in the hierarchy of the current University (Administrative position e.g. Principal of a college, Dean of a faculty, head of institute or Head of dept.; Strictly academic)
<b>Section B Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment *</b>		
Affective Commitment (AC)	AC1	I am very happy being a member of this University
	AC2	I enjoy discussing about my University with the people outside it
	AC3	I really feel as if this University's problems are my own
	AC4	I am deeply attached to this University
	AC5	I am part of the family of this University
	AC6	I feel emotionally attached to this University
	AC7	This University has a great deal of personal meaning for me
Continuance Commitment (CC)	CC1	I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job in this University without having another one lined up
	CC2	It would be very hard for me to leave my job in this University right now, even if I wanted to
	CC3	Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my job in this University now

	CC4	It would be too costly for me to leave this University now
	CC5	Right now, staying on my job in this University is a matter of necessity
Normative Commitment (NC)	NC1	I think that people these days rarely move from job to job too often
	NC2	I believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her University
	NC3	Jumping from this University to another seems unethical to me
	NC4	One of the major reasons I continue to work in this University is that I feel a sense of moral obligation to remain
	NC5	Even if I got another offer of a better job elsewhere I would feel it is right to stay in this University
	NC6	Things were better in the days when people stayed in one institution for most of their career
Section C Independent Variables: Organisational Structure *		
Organisational Formalisation (OF)	OF1	My activities are standardised under in this university
	OF2	There are standard goals I have to achieve in this university
	OF3	I am required to adhere to formal communication procedures in this university
	OF4	Formal written procedures of activities are readily available to me in this university
	OF5	I have been provided with written rules and policies that I should observe
	OF6	A complete written job description on my job has been provided to me
	OF7	A written record on job performance of all staff are kept
Organisational Centralisation (OC)	OC1	This university can be characterised as being highly centralized
	OC2	Only a few people in top management in this university are involved in making decisions about the about the university's relationship with other organizations
	OC3	Any major decision in this university requires approval by top management
	OC4	Every matter has to be referred to someone higher in authority in this university
	OC5	There are a lot of rules and procedures stating how various aspects of my job are done in this university
	OC6	In this university senior management is asked before almost anything is done
	OC7	I take very little action on my own until management approves it
Organisational Complexity (OX)	OX1	Decision-making is decentralised at all levels the university.
	OX2	All decision making is done at departments in this university
	OX3	I have the opportunity to be assigned different tasks by my superiors
	OX4	The different units and departments have autonomy.
	OX5	There is high flow of information and communication access at all levels in this

	university
OX6	I am left to do the work in my way by my superiors
OX7	Rules and policies allow me a lot of flexibility as I do my work
OX8	I feel that I am my own boss in most issues under my authority in this university.

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\* All the items in Sections B and C were scaled from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 5, where 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Undecided; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree.

Wilson Mugizi. "Organisational Structure and Employee Commitment of Academic Staff in a Private University in Uganda ." IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). vol. 24 no. 04, 2019, pp. 72-83.